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THE KENNEDY DOCTRINE

THE EDITORS

THE TRUTH ABOUT CUBA

LEO HUBERMAN

VOL. 13

2

Letter to the United Nations

LAZARO CÁRDENAS

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEETZ

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The MR staff is having a wonderful time reading galley proofs of *From Yalta to Disarmament: Cold War Debate*, by Prof. J. P. Morray. To have the issues in the Cold War presented in such vivid readable form is a real treat. There is no doubt in our minds that this is one of the most important—and useful—works ever published by MR Press. We are proud of the book and urge all of our readers to put in their order at once. As we pointed out in last month's Notes, we underpriced it at \$3.50 prepublication, because the book is longer and much more expensive to print than we had anticipated—it will run to some 384 pages and will be listed at \$8.50. By ordering now you will save \$5 and have the book in your hands as soon as it comes off the press.

Che Guevara's book, *Guerrilla Warfare*, will be off the press about the second week in June and will be sent out immediately thereafter to all who have ordered it at the prepublication price of \$2. Many readers have already taken advantage of the bargain price of \$5 for both books; if you are not one of them, what are you waiting for? Why pay \$12 for two books which you will want to own and which you can get at a saving of \$7 if you order now?

We have received many letters of commendation on our May issue. The lead article, which was entitled "The Criminal Invasion Plan," began with these prophetic words: "A criminal invasion of Cuba is in the advanced stage of planning and may already have been launched by the time

(continued on inside back cover)

THE KENNEDY DOCTRINE

Recent events in Cuba, Laos, and South Vietnam have shown, once again, the extreme weakness of rightist, counter-revolutionary forces in the underdeveloped countries.

The invasion of Cuba could have succeeded only if the counter-revolutionary exiles had enjoyed large-scale popular support inside the country. If that had been the case, the well-armed people's militia could easily have turned on the Castro government and overthrown it. Instead, as we now know, the militia not only smashed the invasion but rapidly and efficiently rounded up known counter-revolutionaries throughout the island. When the showdown came, the revolution showed itself to be strong, the counter-revolution weak.

The struggle in Laos took a different form, but the lesson it teaches is similar. There, ever since Laotian independence was proclaimed by the Geneva Conference of 1954, the United States has maneuvered and intrigued to put and keep right-wing governments in power. Twice the pendulum swung internally toward neutralism (the international position which the Geneva Conference prescribed for Laos), once as a result of a negotiated compromise among warring factions and once as a result of a revolt in the Laotian army itself. Each time, the United States by means of bribes and promises and massive military aid shipments managed to put a patched-up right-wing regime back in the saddle again. If these regimes had had even a modicum of popular support, they could easily have maintained themselves in power: everything else was in their favor. But popular support was precisely what they lacked; and when the opposition forces (Souvanna Phouma, Pathet Lao, and Captain Kong Le's paratroopers) made common cause after the latest American-backed coup, the collapse of the Right followed with dramatic suddenness.

In South Vietnam, the bankruptcy of a policy based on a bankrupt Right can no longer be concealed. There an extremely unpopular, reactionary, and corrupt government (the adject-

tives are Walter Lippmann's) is living its last days, victim of a classic peasant guerrilla campaign that has already captured most of the countryside and is closing in on the cities.

Have Mr. Kennedy and his advisers learned anything from these miserable, abject, humiliating failures of American foreign policy?

Unfortunately, there is little reason to believe so. Their initial reaction to the Cuban debacle, blurted out in Kennedy's panicky speech of April 20th to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, was to send in the marines, as though nothing had changed in the world since the days of McKinley and the first Roosevelt. An international storm of popular protest, the alarm of allied governments, and the sober but deadly serious warnings of Khrushchev all combined to restrain Washington from taking that fatal step. But the intention to overthrow Castro and install a counter-revolutionary regime in Havana, far from having been renounced has been reiterated time and again in the highest quarters.* And in mid-May it seems all but certain that Kennedy is planning to deal with the impending collapse of the Ngo Dinh Diem regime in South Vietnam by sending in United States troops and turning the country into an American military colony on the model of Formosa and South Korea. Wherever reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries fail, substitute the American military—that seems to be the sum and substance of the wisdom Washington has been able to distill from recent experience.

There should be no illusions about where such a policy is leading. Cuba, Laos, and South Vietnam are typical of the underdeveloped countries, not exceptional. The failure of reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries there will be followed, as surely as night follows day, by similar failures throughout the underdeveloped world, in Asia and Africa and Latin America—and, yes, in Europe too, where the Franco and Salazar dictatorships in underdeveloped Spain and Portugal are already living on borrowed time. If the United States is

* "Despite the tragic defeat of a few days ago," said A. A. Berle, Jr., reputedly Kennedy's top advisor on Latin American Affairs, "the contest will continue until Cuba is once more really free." (Quoted in the *Toronto Globe and Mail* of April 26th by George Bain, the paper's Washington correspondent.)

going to try to send in troops to take over every time a rotten right-wing regime collapses, then this country has embarked, whether it knows it or not, on the most ambitious career of naked imperial conquest in the history of the world. It makes no difference whether the avowed purpose is to defend "freedom" against "Communism" or whether the "protected" countries retain the trappings of sovereignty, any government the territory of which is occupied by foreign troops and which remains in power solely owing to the presence of these troops is a colonial regime pure and simple. The clear logic of American policy as it is now being shaped by the Kennedy administration is to turn every underdeveloped country in the world into an outright American colony, whether by counter-revolutionary attack where revolutions already have occurred or may occur, or by preventive occupation where they threaten to occur.

Much could be written about the moral implications of this policy, especially for a country which likes to boast of its own revolutionary origins. As their recent pronouncements make clear, however, our leaders in Washington are in no mood to listen to moral argument. The motto of the United States now is simple: Anything goes—if you can get away with it. The Christian gentlemen who have been entrusted with the conduct of our affairs are more likely to listen to arguments addressed to the second than the first part of this time-honored maxim of statecraft.

So let us ask them to stop and ponder seriously the question: Can they hope to get away with it? Can a new colonial empire be built up and maintained in the second half of the twentieth century?

For anyone who has the slightest sense of history and who has lived through the events of the last two decades, the answer to these questions must surely be obvious. After all, what do the experiences of the older colonial powers mean? Winston Churchill once announced that he had not become His Majesty's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. It made no difference: the process of liquidation had already started, and no government in London could stop it. Other First Ministers with less rigid views had to be found, and fortunately for Britain were found. The British case shows that in skillful hands the process of decolonization

can take place relatively smoothly. But even the British record shows that attempts to block the process, as in Kenya and the Central African Federation, succeed only in generating violence and ill-will, not in stabilizing the status quo.

How much more eloquent is French experience! For eight long years, beginning with an unprovoked bombardment of Haiphong which killed at least 6,000 civilians (the Vietnamese claim 20,000), the French fought tooth and nail to hold their colony in Indo-China. In the end they had to admit defeat at the hands of the very same guerrillas (or their sons) who are even now in the process of toppling the Diem regime in Saigon. (Does Mr. Kennedy want Americans to be the next targets of their patriotic hostility and fighting skill?) And then there is Algeria, France's biggest colony, within easy reach of the metropolis, including in its population more than a million French and other European settlers along with 8 million or so Arabs. Here if anywhere, one would think, it should have been possible to maintain colonial rule, nor can it be argued that the French scrupled to use the most extreme methods to do so (in one repressive action alone, in Constantine in May of 1945, as victory over the Nazis was being celebrated in Europe, the French massacred a number of Arabs which some American correspondents estimated as high as 30,000 to 40,000). But history renders a different verdict. After seven years of the most brutal warfare on record (conservative calculations put total military and civilian casualties at well over a million), the French are once again being forced to concede defeat: it is now only the question of the terms on which an independent Algerian nation will emerge which is still unanswered.

Are our leaders in Washington prepared to launch this country on a course of action which may involve us not in one but in many Algerias? Are they prepared to conscript millions of young Americans and disperse them all over the world to fight against peoples struggling for their own freedom? And if the answer to these questions is yes, do they think they have any better chance of success than those who have tried before and failed? They should think long and hard about the answers before sending even one battalion to South Vietnam: it could be the first step along a road of unmitigated disaster for all of us.

Perhaps they will say that we have misunderstood, that

they have no intention of conquering anyone; that their object is not to bolster up unpopular, corrupt, or reactionary regimes; that while they reject revolution they support reform; that any American troops that may be sent to South Vietnam, or anywhere else later, will remain only temporarily until the local situation can be "corrected."

Maybe they believe all this, we don't know. What we do know is that the road to hell is paved with good intentions, that for many years now American governments have supported nothing but unpopular, corrupt, and reactionary regimes in the underdeveloped countries; that the kind of "reforms" they have sponsored (see, for example, "Korea and U.S. Policy in Asia" in last month's MONTHLY REVIEW) have never done the mass of the people any good at all; and finally that *without a prior revolution* the basic evils which afflict the peoples of the underdeveloped countries of the world can *never* be "corrected."

Let us dwell on this last point a little longer, since it is probably the one which Americans, having long since forgotten the reasons for their own Revolution, are least willing to accept. The other day (May 3), the *Wall Street Journal* published a full-column Letter to the Editor under the heading "Aiding Latin America." The writer introduces himself as one who has "lived for several years in South America—in Uruguay, which is by far the most progressive and advanced of all the Latin countries—and in Peru, which is one of the two or three most backward, and spent some time in Argentina, Bolivia, and Ecuador." After commenting on the contrast between the natural riches of Latin America and the area's economic and social backwardness, the writer proceeds as follows:

Now, as to the reform legislation we are asking in return for our help. The small, wealthy ruling class of the Latin countries will never permit the rise of a literate, articulate, self-supporting middle class.

It is a fact, and we must face it, that the rulers of the Latin countries will not put through social legislation, or if they do it will not be put into effect. They will beg us for money and undoubtedly threaten to turn to Russia if we don't come across, but they will not give the lower classes a chance if they can prevent it. Most of the money, if we do let them have it, will go down the pockets of the grafting politicians, or be spent on magnificent

public buildings and beautiful boulevards while most of the people continue to live in ignorance, squalor, and misery.

Incidentally, at this moment, Peru has social legislation far in advance of anything we have in this country—on paper. I used to sit in the university library and study it, and then walk out into the street and see the poverty all around me, and when I commented on those things to my Peruvian friends, they said: "But we have the legislation in our law books. What more do you want?" There is an old tradition which comes from Spain that the law must be respected but need not be obeyed.

One factor which is very important in the backwardness of the Latin countries is that any man with a drop of Spanish blood in his veins considers himself a "gentleman" and a gentleman does not work.

Land reform laws are another serious problem because in all the countries, and especially in Peru and Bolivia, they will step on the toes of the Roman Catholic Church, which is the largest landowner in those countries. In Peru, the Church owns more than half of the best farm land in the country and rents it out to tenant farmers on hard terms. The renter must furnish all the seed, fertilizer, tools, and labor. One half of the gross crop must be paid to the Church as rent. The farmer pays taxes on his share of the income but the Church does not.

It is interesting to turn from this homely but factual description of the actual situation in Latin America to the Madison Avenue rhetoric of Mr. Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" speech to the diplomats of Latin America assembled in the White House on March 13th. There we read about the "freedom and glory" of the Americas, the quest for the "freedom and dignity of man," the task that lies ahead of demonstrating to the world that "man's unsatisfied aspiration for economic progress and social justice can best be achieved by free men working within a framework of democratic institutions," and so on and so forth. Which "free men" is he talking about, the "small, wealthy ruling class" or "most of the people [who] continue to live in ignorance, squalor, and misery"? What kind of "democratic institutions" are they that can coexist with such contrasts of wealth and poverty, that enable fine-sounding laws to be passed and totally ignored, that sanction the blood-sucking parasitism of a medieval religious establishment?

Shall we perhaps be told that American exhortation,

backed by enough financial aid, can somehow be counted upon to persuade the fine Spanish gentlemen of the Latin American ruling classes to change their ways? Not even Mr. Kennedy believes it. Tucked away in the middle of his speech to the Latin American diplomats is a short paragraph which, for a change, states a plain truth in simple language:

Let me stress that only the determined efforts of the American nations themselves can bring success to this effort. They, and they alone, can mobilize their resources—enlist the energies of their people—and modify their social patterns so that all, and not just a privileged few, share in the fruits of growth. If this effort is made, then outside assistance will give a vital impetus to progress—without it, no amount of help will advance the welfare of the people.

To which one need only add that *of course* the Latin American ruling classes will not make the effort: to do so, in fact, would be tantamount to voluntary abdication, an act which, to the best of our knowledge, no ruling class in history has yet seen fit to perform. Even so faithful a mouthpiece of the American power elite as *Business Week* sees this clearly enough. In its issue of March 18th, it reported on Kennedy's Latin American aid plans, noting in conclusion that there were some skeptical reactions in Washington and elsewhere. The final paragraph reads:

As one dubious critic puts it: "A real revolution is what's needed. Revolution almost never is nice and orderly, particularly in Latin America where many people still understand the carbine better than the ballot. Kennedy will find that it isn't easy to grow a revolution in a neat suburban hothouse."

Needless to say, Mr. Kennedy is not interested in "real revolutions"—whether or not they are grown in suburban hothouses. And as the example of Cuba sufficiently demonstrates, any Latin American country that is so rash as to grow its own will not only get no help at all from the United States but can at the least count on the full treatment of the CIA. In the meantime, there can be little doubt that in practice whatever financial aid may be directed to Latin America will have the opposite effect of what is allegedly intended. It will simply serve to entrench in power the small wealthy ruling classes which al-

ready constitute an impassable roadblock on the route to economic and social development. Washington will get its *quid pro quo* in the form of some more fine-sounding legislative enactments which no one will take any notice of, and the mass of the people will get their usual reward, the privilege of continuing to live in ignorance, squalor, and misery. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

The only hitch is that underneath the surface other kinds of change are taking place which can and will end not in the same thing but in something entirely different. The mass of the people are fed up with their usual reward and in no mood to accept more of it. Moreover, as Cuba once again demonstrates, they don't have to go fatalistically on in the old way. They can revolt and they can win—even against the seemingly invincible power of Washington-armed and Washington-financed military establishments. In short, they can grow their own revolutions, not in suburban hothouses but in the lofty mountains and tangled jungles with which nature, in her infinite bounty, saw fit to endow the Latin American lands.

But the men of Washington, too, have learned from Cuba. Before January 1, 1959, and for some time after too, they did not believe in the possibility of a real Latin American revolution: no leaders would be foolhardy enough to try it, and if they did they could soon be brought to heel through the economic weapons of boycott and embargo. By the time Fidel, with the help of the socialist countries, had proved this theory wrong it was too late for Washington to reverse the situation except by means of a direct military aggression which could easily touch off World War III. American policy-makers are not likely to be so dilatory next time a real revolution threatens to take power in Latin America. In fact, they are likely to act as they are planning to act in South Vietnam now, by sending in American troops to keep in power still another "extremely unpopular, reactionary, and corrupt" regime. And that, we repeat, is precisely the process by which the United States has been acquiring military colonies and will continue to acquire them as long as the present foreign policy course is adhered to. It is also the process by which this nation, which still ironically prides itself on its anti-colonial past, will get involved in an endless series of dreadful colonial wars. What else was it that

Mr. Kennedy was foretelling when he pronounced the following ominous words in his speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors?

We dare not fail to see the insidious nature of this new and deeper struggle. We dare not fail to grasp the new concepts, the new tools, the new sense of urgency we will need to combat it whether in Cuba or South Vietnam. And we dare not fail to realize that this struggle is taking place every day, without fanfare, in thousands of villages and markets, day and night and in classrooms all over the globe. . . .

No greater task faces this nation or this administration. No other challenge is more deserving of our every effort and energy. Too long we have fixed our eyes on traditional military needs, on armies prepared to cross borders or missiles poised for flight. Now it is clear that this is no longer enough—that our security may be lost piece by piece, country by country, without the firing of a single missile or the crossing of a single border.

We intend to profit from this lesson. We intend to re-examine and reorient our forces of all kinds—our tactics and other institutions here in this community. We intend to intensify our efforts for a struggle in many ways more difficult than war, where disappointment will often accompany us.

What else, we ask, is this but a declaration that the United States intends to move in "country by country" to fight the "insidious" foe which now threatens "our security," not from Moscow or Peking, be it noted, but "in thousands of villages and markets, day and night and in classrooms all over the globe"? What else but a recipe for counter-revolutionary wars anywhere on the face of the earth? And when Mr. Kennedy adds, "I am determined upon our system's survival and success, regardless of the cost and regardless of the peril," what else is he saying but that, Samson-like, he is prepared to destroy the world rather than allow it to follow a course of which he disapproves?

This, then, is the real meaning of what the world calls the "Kennedy Doctrine." It is a doctrine of despair and disaster, for us in this country as well as for people all over the world. If it is America's last word, it is indeed hard to imagine how the outlook for the future could be darker.

But is it America's last word?

We are not prepared to admit it, and we think no one else should be either. The United States could pursue an entirely different foreign policy. It could recognize the inevitability of socialist revolutions in the underdeveloped countries, and it could seek to make the necessary adaptations both at home and abroad. With respect to Cuba, for example, as Leo Huberman emphasizes in his article elsewhere in this issue, this would mean reopening diplomatic and trade relations and accepting Cuba's recently reiterated offer to negotiate, with each side recognizing from the outset that the other has legitimate interests to protect and grievances to settle. No one claims that Cuba is a military threat to the United States, and Khrushchev has emphatically stated that the Soviet Union wants no bases there. (How could the Soviet Union seek bases in Cuba, or in any other foreign country for that matter, without completely negating its case against United States bases around its own borders?) All these matters could easily be incorporated in a treaty, *provided only that the United States would recognize Cuba's right to work out her own destiny free of outside interference.*

Extended from Cuba to the rest of the underdeveloped countries of the world, this principle would rapidly transform the international scene. What is more, it would make possible for the first time what the United States claims to be interested in, non-violent social revolutions. The ruling classes of Latin America, for example, deprived of their assurance of all-out United States financial and military support, and aware of the rising revolutionary sentiments of their own people, might well begin to concede genuine reforms in an effort to save their skins. And the process of reform, once peacefully under way, could undoubtedly snowball into a real revolution—once again, provided the reactionaries are unable to rely on outside support. If the United States showed itself sympathetic and willing to help new revolutionary governments to solve their problems, the process would be correspondingly less violent and more rapid—and this country would gain gratitude and good will instead of hatred.

Such a foreign policy would certainly mean acquiescing in the loss of United States foreign investments in the underdeveloped countries, though reasonable compensation agreements such as Cuba has offered to negotiate would reduce the amount

of the loss. Weighed against the advantages to be gained from a peaceful world, however, this factor should be considered by any rational person to be of infinitesimal importance. In 1959, the direct investments of American corporations everywhere in the world except Canada and Europe amounted to \$14.2 billion dollars. This was less than a third of the military budget of the United States government for that year alone. Let the government fully, even doubly, compensate the corporations for their loss of foreign assets: a better bargain for the American people could not be imagined.

What are the chances that a rational foreign policy along these lines will actually be adopted? Not very good, to be sure. But not nonexistent either. There are some encouraging signs of alarm at the country's present course in the universities, among both faculty and students. But even more hopeful for the longer run are the reactions to the Cuban crisis among America's NATO allies. The following, from an editorial in the *Toronto Star* of May 2nd, appears to be by no means untypical of liberal, and even much conservative, opinion in the allied countries:

When President Dorticos proposed that Cuba and the United States seek "a formula of peaceful coexistence, diplomatic relations and even friendly relations," the State Department responded curtly: "Communism in this hemisphere is not negotiable." . . .

Rejection of the Cuban olive branch is part of the same package with the U.S.-organized invasion of Cuba and the so-called "Kennedy Doctrine." Its essence is that the peoples of this hemisphere can have governments of their own choice—provided these are acceptable to Washington. It sets the United States as an arbiter of what is Communism and what is not. And, even more than in the days of John Foster Dulles, it makes anti-Communism the yardstick of all diplomacy, politics, and virtue.

The United States is thus again becoming a captive of its own slogans. President Kennedy has been justly praised for speaking out in favor of social revolution in Latin America. But the trouble with such revolutions is that they are usually violent, and that they have a habit of devouring U.S. investments. This, in turn, makes Washington see Red.

It is a vicious circle that cannot be broken until the United States learns to accept social revolution as an essential and desirable, if painful, phase in the development of Latin America.

If perfectly respectable opinion in Canada can understand this, we refuse to believe that it is impossible for Americans to understand it too. And when enough of them do, we can put the Kennedy doctrine in the wastebasket where it belongs and start out on a new and more hopeful course in international affairs.

(May 14, 1961)

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THE TRUTH ABOUT CUBA

BY LEO HUBERMAN

In his speech at the annual dinner of the Bureau of Advertising of the American Newspaper Publishers Association on April 27, President Kennedy urged the publishers to exercise the same self-restraint and self-discipline in their handling of the news that they do in time of war. He said:

Every newspaper now asks itself, with respect to every story: "Is it news?" All I suggest is that you add the question: "Is it in the interest of national security?"

I share the President's concern for our country's security. I think the press should indeed examine its responsibilities in this regard. Of particular importance in respect to our national security is one question which the President, regrettably, did not mention. That is the question: "Is it the truth?" I suggest that this is the key question to be asked, "in the interest of national security."

Perhaps Mr. Kennedy did not bring that question to the attention of the publishers because it would have come with bad grace from the man directing the various government agencies which fed many of the lies about the Cuban situation to the newspapers which printed those lies. Whatever the reason, the fact is clear: seldom, if ever in the history of our country, have the American people been so deceived, so misled, so lied to, as they have been in respect to Cuba.

Look at the *New York Times* for Sunday, April 16. The headline on the front page tells the story of the bombing of three air bases in Cuba on Saturday morning. Below the headlines are two pictures: the top one showing one of the bombers supposed to have been used in the raids, and the bottom one the alleged pilot of the plane. Of the eight columns on the front page, four are devoted to the story of the air raids, and in every one of the four the tale is told, in one way or another, that the

This is the text of a talk given to the Monthly Review Associates Birthday Meeting in New York, May 22, 1961.

attacks on the Cuban air bases had been made by defecting Cuban pilots in Cuban Air Force planes. This is denied by Fidel Castro and President Dorticos, from Havana, in the lead column, and by Raul Roa at the UN in another column. Adlai Stevenson, the great liberal representing the United States at the UN, replies to Mr. Roa by sticking to the story that the planes "to the best of our knowledge were Castro's own air force planes and, according to the pilots, they took off from Castro's own air force fields."

The fourth column I found particularly fascinating in the light of later events. This is the way it begins:

U.S. SEEKING DATA ON RAID IN CUBA

Salinger Says Government Is Keeping Close Watch

Special to The New York Times
Washington, April 15—The White House denied any knowledge today of aerial bombings in Cuba except for what had appeared in news reports.

Pierre Salinger, President Kennedy's press secretary, said the United States was trying to get all the information on the attacks on the Cuban bases. . . .

The whole world knows now that the story that the bombing had been done by defecting pilots was phoney; and that the Salinger White House denial of any knowledge of the bombings was an outright lie. The truth came out, not because conscience was bothering the lying government officials and the newspapers which willingly printed their lies, but because the criminal invasion of Cuba failed and everybody connected with the failure wanted to get off the hook—even if that involved the unusual experience of telling the truth for a change.

The whole world knows now that of all the people referred

THE TRUTH ABOUT CUBA

to in those four columns of the *Times* only three were telling the truth. They were Fidel Castro, President Dorticos, and Raul Roa. And therein lies one important clue to the question which has confounded so many Americans: why do most of the people of Cuba have such faith in the Revolutionary Government? Apart from the economic reason, the answer is that the revolutionary leadership has earned their trust. From the earliest days of the struggle, in the Sierra Maestra, the leaders won the confidence of the people because they believed, as Che Guevara puts it in his book, *Guerrilla Warfare*, that "the fundamental principle of popular propaganda is truth; it is preferable to tell the truth, small in its dimensions, than a large lie artfully embellished." No faking, no lying, no pulling of punches—tell your story straight. Give your followers, advises Che, "a clear comprehension of the task to be performed, without conceit, without illusions, without false hopes of an easy triumph."

That is precisely what I saw Fidel do on Sunday, April 23, in one of those four-hour TV speeches which infuriate Americans (to whom he is not addressing himself) and delight Cubans (to whom he is). In sober, calm tones, seated at a desk and using a pointer and blackboard behind him, he taught a lesson to his countrymen: Why were we invaded? How was the battle fought? What mistakes did we make? What did we learn from the attack? Are we safe now? What lies ahead? Fidel's speeches are long because he has much to tell his listeners; he tells them what the government is doing and why, what problems face the country, its progress in this field, its lack of progress in that. And because he keeps them thus informed, they get a feeling of participation in government which few citizens of other countries have ever felt.

Given tremendous economic and social benefits, the dignity and pride that comes to a people when it shakes off its colonial yoke and becomes a sovereign nation, the sense of belonging that comes when you are one with the leadership of your country, you will love and support your government. The testing time came for the Cuban people when their country was invaded. The world knows now how well they passed that test.

What was Cuba like during the invasion period? It was

definitely *not* like what was reported in the U.S. press. You were told that there was fighting in the streets of Havana. I was there from April 14 to April 26, walking and riding in the streets every day and every night. There was no fighting of any kind at any time.

What about "the terror"? Yes, for those who were suspect by the police, this was, indeed, a time of terror. Fidel was frank about it in his report to the people:

We found it necessary to round up a lot of people to prevent sabotage. Among them, unfortunately, were some innocent people. We are sorry for the injustice done them, but we had no choice. We are processing the cases as fast as possible and releasing those who were unjustly picked up.

There was no large-scale sabotage during the invasion period, though it is fairly simple with easy-to-hide chemicals to set a building ablaze, or to set fire to a cane field. A few days before the invasion began, El Encanto, the big downtown Havana department store, had been burned to the ground. I was told that a match box, filled with phosphorus and thrown into a vent, was the method used. This must be a common weapon of the saboteur because every time you were searched on entering your hotel or a government building, the militiamen opened your match box and looked inside.

I interviewed the prisoners on the battlefield. As was to be expected, their stories were flavored with the kind of detail designed to save them from execution ("I myself never fired a single shot") but on one point they were virtually unanimous: they had not anticipated the fierce resistance they encountered. On the contrary, they had been assured by the CIA that there would be little fighting; that discontent and unemployment were prevalent on the island, and the invasion forces would, immediately on landing, be joined by rebellious Cubans, including disaffected militiamen; meanwhile the country would be thrown into confusion and panic as the counter-revolutionary terrorists committed their acts of sabotage.

This they had been led to believe—and this was, indeed, what was happening according to the earliest reports sent out by those gr-r-eat American press associations, AP and UPI. This was the forecast given to the people of the United States

by the press agents of the "Revolutionary Council"; and this was the analysis of events given by the CIA to our government officials. In short, the entire affair from beginning to end was based on a completely mistaken analysis of the situation in Cuba and the attitude of the Cuban people.

In Cuba, said Camilo Cienfuegos, "the army is the people in uniform." When the testing time came, this army of "the people with guns" felt it had something to fight for—and die for. Not so the invaders. When Fidel Castro fearlessly—but recklessly—stood up on the top of a tank and shouted to them, hidden in the swamps, that they were surrounded and should surrender—they surrendered. From the account of one of the prisoners, we learned that the militiamen acted differently: "When we met the first bunch of *milicianos* we told them they must surrender. They shouted 'Patria o Muerte' and started shooting."

Valiant on the battlefield, this "people in arms" was magnanimous when the fighting was over. We visited a hospital on our way back from the front. In a small room, filled with militia men and women, we saw a doctor about to operate on a gravely wounded invader. He bent over the wounded man, instrument in hand, and said gently, "Compañero, this is going to hurt a little."

These are the Cuban people—these are the monsters with whom the United States now refuses to negotiate. Won't our policy-makers ever learn anything? Are they going to continue to act stupidly and arrogantly, shutting their eyes to the reality of events in Cuba? The invasion of Cuba resulted in disaster for the United States. It need not have happened had they paid heed to the warning, given in 1960, by Che Guevara in his book *Guerrilla Warfare*:

An army of six million Cubans will grasp weapons as a single man in order to defend its territory and its Revolution. Cuba will be a battlefield where the army will be nothing other than part of the people in arms. . . .

And around the world international solidarity will create a barrier of hundreds of millions of people protesting against aggression. Monopoly will see how its pillars are undermined and how the spiderweb curtain of its newspaper lies is swept away by a puff.

Viva la Revolucion Socialista!

The Revolutionary Government took power in Cuba on January 1, 1959. Twenty-seven months later, in a television address to the nation, on the day after the bombing of the air bases, Fidel Castro, for the first time, characterized the revolution as *socialist*. The change from Viva la Revolucion! to Viva la Revolucion Socialista! was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm by the people. It marks a significant step forward in the history of the Cuban Revolution.

To grasp the full meaning of the change, it is important to remember that before the Revolution only the politically conscious workers, students, and intellectuals were opposed to imperialist domination. Most Cubans were not even aware of the fact that this was the root cause of their difficulties—they had a feeling of dependence on, and even affection for, the United States. Their attitude toward the Soviet Union was like that of most Americans—they were either ignorant of its achievements, or hated it for all the reasons given daily in their press and on their radio. In fact, it is the opinion of some experts that Cuba was even more anti-Communist than the U.S.

Now the attitude of the Cuban people toward the U.S. and the USSR has been completely reversed. Most Cuban people today hate the United States and love the Soviet Union. What caused the change?

The United States itself is, in large part, responsible. Fidel has told the people again and again, and, indeed, his government has demonstrated by its deeds, that the Revolution is of, by, and for the humble people. To be for or against the Revolution was to be for or against the people. The United States was against the Revolution even before it came to power—in its continued support of Batista and its sale of arms to him against the protest of the revolutionists. After the Revolutionary Government took power, the U.S. made one move after another designed to harass it; these moves were countered by the resolute revolutionary regime, and relations grew steadily worse until U.S. hostility grew into open declared enmity, resulting finally in the invasion by a counter-revolutionary force equipped, trained, and financed by the United States.

It was economic pressure from the United States which forced Cuba to turn to the socialist bloc; it is important to note

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that only *after Cuban-U.S. relations had worsened, did the Revolutionary Government begin to develop cordial relations with the Soviet Union.* While the United States continued to do everything in its power to smash the Revolution, the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc helped it—their aid, in fact, became indispensable to the very existence of revolutionary Cuba. To their extraordinarily generous material and technical help were added the two firm warning notes from Khrushchev to Kennedy at the time of the invasion. Coming, as they did, at the moment of greatest peril for the Revolution, they were received with heartfelt gratitude. And the Soviet achievement of putting the first man into space just the week before, gave the Cubans the feeling of a victory for their side. The cycle was complete—for the government of the United States, bitterness and hatred; for the Soviet Union, China, and the rest of the socialist bloc, admiration and love.

Let me be clear. I am *not* saying that opposition by the U.S., of itself, forced the Revolutionary Government to move toward socialism—it served, rather, to speed up the process. Given the original objectives of the revolutionists—to make Cuba a sovereign nation, to eliminate unemployment and poverty, to abolish illiteracy, to provide adequate medical care, to get rid of dishonesty in government, to redistribute income—there was no other way out. The revolutionists soon learned the accuracy of the observation by Tolstoy: “The rich will do everything for the poor except get off their backs.” The revolutionists soon learned that to enable the Cuban masses to stand up, stretch their limbs, breathe freely, and walk like men, they had to get the exploiters off the backs of the people. This meant a deep, thorough-going, economic and social revolution; it meant a change in the structure of power; it meant the substitution for an archaic system of production for profit, of a planned system of production for use; it meant socialism.

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba learned what all other underdeveloped countries are learning—that the choice is between capitalist imperialism which is the cause of their ills, and socialism which is the cure. To accomplish their aims, to march unerringly toward their goal, to enable the country to use its natural resources to the fullest so that its people could live like human beings, the Cuban revolutionists found they must

discard the system which breeds the exploitation they wanted to abolish.

In replacing capitalism with socialism, they had to take away the property, power, and privilege of the exploiting classes, both foreign and domestic. This, naturally, led to the loss of support from these classes, and finally to the invasion which was an attempt to restore the old setup. It is significant that of the 1200-odd prisoners taken in the invasion, 800 came from families who formerly owned 909,348 acres of land, 70 industries, 10 sugar centrals, 9,666 houses, 5 mines, and 2 banks.

It is not surprising that the cry of free elections, free speech, and free press shouted by the U.S. government and these rich invaders, fell on deaf ears. I do not, for one moment, minimize the value of free elections, free speech, and free press. These are valuable, essential liberties, of the utmost importance to people who have enough to eat, decent housing, education, and medical care. But they are not of particular urgency to hungry, uneducated, diseased, exploited people. When those of us with full bellies tell the people with empty bellies that what they need most in the world is free elections, they will not listen; they know better, they know that what they need first and foremost is bread, shoes, a school for their children, medical care, adequate clothing, a decent home. All these necessities of life, plus the dignity that goes with their enjoyment, are what the Cuban masses are now getting for the first time in their history. That is why, to the amazement of those who have never been hungry in their lives, they do not cower before the epithet "Communism," but respond with the slogan "Patria o Muerte."

How about Communism?

We are continually being warned about the growth of Communism in Cuba and, indeed, everywhere else in the world. Ask yourself the question: how does it happen that the forces of Communism make such headway? Is it because the Communists are so much cleverer than the capitalists? Is it because they are devils who fool the masses with fake promises that they don't deliver? That's what we are told, but if that is the case, how come more and more people are turning to what should have become by this time an obviously discredited system of society? Can it be that the exploited peoples find in socialism the

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answer to their problems while capitalism is precisely what creates those problems?

There is no doubt that the influence of the Communist Party in Cuba has grown considerably in recent months. But there is every doubt that "they have taken over," that Fidel is their prisoner. Fidel and his advisors determine policy, and they welcome the support of the Communists in effectuating that policy, in helping to get the message to the people. The Communists are eager to do this and work with zeal because the policy is one they agree with—their only quarrel with it is that Fidel is frequently ahead of them, more daring, more Left.

The Communist Party did not play a significant role in making the Revolution, and they were formerly quite unpopular. Their popularity has grown with the change in attitude toward the Soviet Union. Another reason for their increased popularity may be traced, ironically enough, to the United States and the counter-revolutionaries who attributed every major change welcomed by the people, not to Fidel, but to the Communists!

There will be soon, a union of three groups into one united revolutionary party—the left elements of the July 26 Movement, the Directorio, and the Communist Party. Meanwhile, there are more Communists in positions of importance than ever before. This shocks people in the United States where the dogma of anti-Communism has become the be-all and end-all of our foreign policy. It is less shocking to some of our allied countries where Communist participation in public affairs has long been a fact.

In any case, you must choose for yourself how you wish to appraise what is happening in Cuba. You can approach the problem by asking: Is it good for the Cuban people—never mind what it is called.

Or you can ask: Is it Communism—never mind if it is good for the Cuban people.

The choice is yours.

Socialist Industry, Agriculture, Education

The change from a colony to a sovereign nation, from the capitalist mode of production to the socialist, has put Cuba on a new highway headed straight in the direction of the economic

and social welfare of the people. Gone are the power, property, and privilege of the ruling class which were an effective obstruction to necessary changes on the old road; on the new highway no such obstacles are encountered. Nevertheless, the going is not easy.

In the chapter of our book entitled "Epilogue—Cuba Revisited" Paul Sweezy and I described the major difficulties relating to production and planning as of October, 1960. In the main, these problems still exist though considerable progress has been made in solving them.

The technical problems caused by the shiftover in the flow of trade from the U.S. to the S.U. will continue for some time. Trade with the Soviet Union amounted to \$2 million in 1958; it will be \$500 million this year. In the old days when you were importing goods from the U.S. and you were short, you picked up a phone and within three days shipment was made—or even on the same day, by plane, if absolutely necessary. With such prompt delivery no warehouses were needed. Today that shipment might take a month to get to you from a port in the Black Sea or two months from China; supplies, therefore, must always be on hand in case the shipment is delayed. Fats and liquids once came from the United States in tank cars and could be stored in them; now that is no longer possible. Flexibility is limited and the scheduling of ships is much more difficult.

Spare parts are still a problem. They frequently can be made in Cuba with materials supplied by the socialist bloc—if you know the *exact* specifications of the material you want so that it can be adapted to your machine. The same problem is presented in chemicals and medicines. The American managers of the plants equipped with American machinery left the country carrying their secret formulas with them and you have to guess at the ingredients comprising the chemicals and medicines which are adapted to the machines you have.

The socialist bloc does not have enough ships to transport all the goods you are importing; additional ships must be hired and for that you need dollars. Or if you can secure needed goods from other countries you must have the currency of those countries.

Experienced technicians and administrators are still in short supply.

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These are a few of the many difficulties that arose when the flow of trade was switched; they are being worked on and in the course of time will be solved. Meanwhile shortages occur which are annoying but not serious. The people understand the problem. Fidel has told them that though they would have to queue up for some things, Cuba would never run short of the following: "Food, medicines, clothing, shoes, education, recreation, and bullets for counter-revolutionaries." So far this promise has been kept.

Next year, 1962, will be "The Year of the Economic Plan," and a big leap forward in many fields is anticipated. Already the basis has been laid for a much-needed improvement in the gathering of statistics and in industrial administration. In Cuba and in the socialist-bloc countries, thousands of young people are being trained as engineers, scientific workers, and technicians. Firm contracts, on long-term credits, have been signed with the socialist-bloc countries as well as West Germany, Japan, and Italy, for the construction beginning this year, and continuing thereafter, of factories making steel, machine tools, precision screws, bicycles, sewing machines, hand tools, glass, gas stoves, pressure cookers, refrigerators, dish washers, motors, trucks, tractors, and many other products, as well as power plants which will supply 575,000 kilowatts by the year 1966.

I have gone over figures from the Ministry of Industry showing planned production for this year, actual production, and comparison with 1960. As was to be expected, though the targets in many industries have not been reached, nevertheless there has been an improvement in many cases over last year. In some few instances, actual production has exceeded the plan figure, in other cases special problems have brought actual production down to 50 percent of the target. For planning purposes 80 percent of industry (including sugar) is in the public sector. Of total production in agriculture, about 50 percent is in the public sector; however, since the private producers must sell to government agencies, the government has almost total command of agricultural production.

Rationalization of industry has brought tremendous savings and increased production. In an economic system where waste helps make the economy function, you can import wire

to put around the tops of milk bottles, wrap cigarette packages in cellophane, and have a large number of factories producing various brands of cigarettes which are all alike except in name. Now all that is being changed. Where formerly there were 11 match factories in a cartel designed to maximize profits, today three factories turn out the same number of matches. Where formerly in the pharmaceutical industry, hundreds of products were produced bearing various brand names which, from a medical point of view, were no different from each other, today the government sticks to the few necessary basic formulas. So with oil—Texaco gas differs from Esso a little bit, but not in quality. Today instead of using two formulas one is being used. Where formerly each manufacturer demanded a particular type of can and got it, today there are ten basic types of cans and that's it. Where formerly textile factories produced shirts, pajamas, blouses, etc., today factories specialize in one item, not sacrificing design, but increasing production. A former U.S. Rubber factory about 15 miles from Havana used to produce about 600,000 pairs of shoes; today, with the same equipment, with Cuban replacements for the American technicians who ran the plant before, with the factory working longer hours, 900,000 pairs of shoes are being produced at a 20 percent reduction in price. Where formerly Cuba imported expensive finished paper, today it imports more paper pulp and makes the finished paper itself. As a result, although much more paper is being used in printing textbooks for many more children at school, for new magazines, and for many new cultural activities, the expanded demand is being met at a lower cost.

Not only was there a waste of materials and resources in the Cuban capitalist economy, but there was also a waste of people. With rational planning that comes with socialism, plus increased opportunities for education, the latent energies and talents of formerly trapped people are released. Once freed, they can do wonders—as Cuban experience is proving in the growing number of peasants and laborers now functioning as administrators, managers, and heads of departments.

There are instances, too, of expropriated owners of big establishments now working for the Revolution just as hard as they once did for profit—and loving it. I was given, as an example, the case of an owner of a plastics factory who had sold

his business to the government; he was asked to continue working and today he is the head of an important metallurgical project and consultant on other government projects. He is highly respected by the men under him, and esteemed for his excellent work by the agency which hires him.

By enlisting the untapped reserves of manpower, by using scarce resources wisely instead of wastefully, by rationalization in industry, greater production has been achieved at lower cost. But rationalization, while it solves many technological problems, occasionally creates a political problem. Suppose, for example, there are 1000 workers in a plant; with rationalization, the same plant could produce the same amount of goods with 500 workers; nevertheless, *at this time*, it is wiser to cut the working force down to only 800 workers, and find jobs elsewhere for the other 200 at the same rate of pay. If everything works according to the Plan, it is anticipated that there will be a shortage of labor in Cuba by 1965. Right now, unemployment is still a problem.

Nevertheless, for the first time in the country's history, this year there were not enough workers to cut cane, and the aid of city people had to be enlisted. This shortage comes about mainly as a result of the growing diversification of crops, and if progress in agriculture continues then the hope that "the dead season is buried" will become a reality. It is estimated that the number of *all-year-round* agricultural workers will be increased by 50,000 this year. Agricultural output is going up because, with socialist planning has come, in addition to crop diversification, more intensive cultivation, reclamation, more insecticides, more machinery, and better organization.

Production in both industry and agriculture was, of course, severely hurt during the recent invasion when the army of workers in factories and fields was engaged in battle and those who were not had their minds on the fighting, not on their work. The kind of continued permanent mobilization which is forced on Cuba by the threat of another attack undoubtedly will continue to lower output; but since the net result of such attacks is to intensify revolutionary feeling, at least part of the loss will be made up in answer to appeals for harder work.

One achievement of which Cuba is justly proud, and which

Fidel mentioned in his report to the people, is the fact that the anti-illiteracy program continued without let-up during the whole invasion period. This is "The Year of Education," and in no other field are the potentialities for progress under a socialist form of government so clearly visible. Of the total population of 6½ millions, almost one quarter, some 1½ million people, young and old, are illiterate. The Revolutionary Government has set itself the tremendous task of getting rid of illiteracy *this year*—and they will do it. The objective is to have all the illiterates learn to read and write, and for the older ones to rise to a cultural level equivalent to sixth grade.

This is one of Fidel's pet projects—another illustration of his unparalleled understanding of what is in the hearts of his people. You know the patronizing assertion so often made by one who has never lacked for anything that "the poor don't want to learn." I don't believe this generalization is applicable to any people anywhere, but it is certainly not true of the poorest of the poor in Cuba. In his excellent book, *Rural Cuba*, Lowry Nelson tells of the peasants in the old days who were so determined to see that their children received instruction that they constructed school buildings and hired teachers at their own expense. They wanted education in the old Cuba—but they didn't get it. Today, they are getting it. The slogans tell the story; "If you know, teach; if you don't know, learn." And "Every Cuban a teacher; every house a school."

The campaign to abolish illiteracy is so ambitious a project that it involves the mobilization of the entire people through whatever organizations they belong to. There are so many illiterates of all ages and the time is so short that thousands of teachers are needed. Some 60,000 people will be enlisted in this teaching army, most of them youngsters beginning at age 12 and going through university graduate students, though in exceptional cases, children as young as nine and adults as old as 80 will be included. The concentration is on young people because of their enthusiasm, and because they will find it easier to bear life in the inaccessible regions of the country to which many of them will be assigned.

The program has already started—one of my friends has been teaching a class twice a week made up of the maids who work in her neighborhood. During the last week of April, I

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lunched at another friend's house with his 13-year-old boy who, when school closed one month early, in May, would go to a special school in Varadero for a two weeks teachers' training course; then he expected to be sent to a peasant's house in the mountains where he would live with the family, help with the work—and teach. Girls of his age will teach in the rural areas also but they will live in a group, with a Junior High School teacher in charge. Regular schools will reopen the end of October, one month late, so the "Alphabetization Committee" of the Ministry of Education will have the services of its school children teachers for six consecutive months.

The anti-illiteracy crusade follows an earlier, less extensive program launched by Fidel a year ago. He asked for 1000 men and women who had education beyond the level of second year high school to volunteer to go into the most remote areas of the country to teach reading and writing, hygiene, and nutrition. Five thousand people from all walks of life answered the call—including doctors and engineers who had to be dissuaded from going because the Revolution needed them in their own professions.

These volunteer teachers received special training in camps set up in the mountains; they average 50 students per teacher—classes for youngsters from 5 years of age up in the day time, and adults in the evening.

These are the special programs connected with stamping out illiteracy. In addition, of course, the Education Ministry has carried on its normal activities. Enrollment in primary schools for the year 1960-1961 has practically doubled; 16,500 new primary school classrooms have been set up; and another 1500 new ones will be functioning by September. Part of the money comes from a reduction in the old inflated number of 1515 school "inspectors" to the indispensable number of 420. Before the Revolution, \$1,200,000 was budgeted for teaching material for a two-year period; much of the money was stolen, and what was left was spent on useless materials that reflected the philosophy of a graft-ridden educational ministry. In the first two years of the Revolutionary Government, the budget has been increased to \$12 million for which enormous quantities of books and maps, and furnishings of excellent quality have been acquired. Run-down classrooms cost the old regime

an average of \$2,489 annually; today better classrooms, better-equipped, cost the Revolutionary Government an average of \$1900 annually.

The Revolution has improved the lot of the poorest people of Cuba in many ways. For them, The Year of Education and the general improvement and extension of the school system is one of its most notable achievements.

A Solution to the Problem

The news of the march of progress in Cuba has reached the ears of the hungry, illiterate masses in Latin America. Castroism is spreading among the people. This fact is so evident, and its implications are so alarming that the United States has embarked on a program designed to stave off violent revolution there. The presentation of the problem in President Kennedy's message to Congress on Latin American aid, on March 14, was admirable. The statistics he used pointed up the need:

The average per capita annual product is only \$280, less than one-ninth of the United States—and in large areas, inhabited by millions of people, it is less than \$70. . . .

The average American can expect to live 70 years, but life expectancy in Latin America is only 46. . . . While our rate of infant mortality is less than 30 per thousand, it is less than 110 per thousand in Latin America. . . .

Illiteracy extends to almost half the adults, reaching 90 percent in one country. And approximately 50 percent of school-age children have no schools to attend. . . .

In one major Latin American capital a third of the total population is living in filthy and unbearable slums. In another country 80 percent of the entire population is housed in makeshift shacks and barracks. . . .

Poverty, illiteracy, hopelessness and a sense of injustice—the conditions which breed political and social unrest—are almost universal in the Latin American countryside.

The program to be inaugurated with the \$500 million requested by the President will launch, he advises the Congress, "a major inter-American program for the social progress which is an indispensable condition to growth—a program for improved land use, education, health and housing. . . . There is

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an immediate need for higher and more diversified agricultural production, better distribution of wealth and income, and wider sharing in the process of development."

The statement of the problem by Mr. Kennedy and what must be done about it were convincing, and the Senate has now adopted his "Alliance for Progress" aid program. There is, however, one important defect in the plan—it won't work. Not because the appropriation isn't large enough—the plan wouldn't work if the \$500 million were multiplied five times.

It won't work because it doesn't affect the imperialist relationship and the feudal landowning structure which are the cause of the conditions Mr. Kennedy wants to alleviate. Latin American countries are rich in natural resources, but their people are desperately poor. Why? Because their economies are lop-sided; the wealth flowing from their natural resources is appropriated by U.S. monopoly corporations which have distorted these economies in their concentration on the extraction of profitable raw materials; the land is in the hands of large landowners who hold much of it out of production and underutilize the rest. Unless and until these two ruling groups are forced to give up their power, property, and privilege, unless the economic and social structure of these Latin American countries is radically altered, then nothing fundamental will be changed. The people will remain hungry.*

The aid program won't do what Mr. Kennedy says it is designed to do. But all the reforms he seeks—"improved land use, education, health, housing, higher and more diversified agricultural production, better distribution of wealth and income, and wider sharing in the process of development"—every one of these, without exception, has been achieved. Where? In Cuba. And Mr. Kennedy is right—such reforms *have* accomplished miracles of betterment for the people. But they were brought about in the only way possible—through revolution, through getting rid of the power, property, and privilege of the imperialists and the landowners. That is the explanation for the curious paradox—why the United States is trying to smash the Cuban Revolution for doing what it says it wants the Latin American countries to do.

* For a more extended discussion of this theme, see my article, "Which Way for Latin America?" in MR, March, 1961.

But this is the year 1961 and the people of Latin America are beginning to understand these things. Their governments, of course, are on the side of the United States, and they would all willingly be bought by American money, as some already have been—except they are afraid that the people won't stand for it. Nevertheless, this is what the United States will try next—to get the Latin American countries to line up in isolating Cuba, perhaps even to invade her.

There is no easy solution for the mess this country is in concerning Cuba and Latin America. Revolutions are coming in the Latin American countries, and the best hope for U.S. monopoly capitalism is to hang on for as long as possible. With that as a premise, I would propose the following as the most sensible solution to the problem: Go back to the Good Neighbor Policy. Do what Madison Avenue calls “changing the image,” by taking four concrete steps in respect to Cuba:

(1) Sit down with Fidel Castro and talk things over as one sovereign nation to another. It was President Kennedy who said so wisely in his Inaugural Address: “Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.”

(2) Ask Fidel to restore the Revolutionary Government's original proposal of paying for confiscated property with 20-year bonds paying $4\frac{1}{2}$ percent interest. Offer to provide Castro with the money to pay for these bonds, by making a long-term loan at a low rate of interest.

(3) Return Guantanamo to Cuba. Since the U.S. doesn't really need the base any more, this magnanimous gesture would cost nothing and gain a great deal.

(4) The U.S. fears Cuba's dependence on the socialist-bloc countries. Let Washington end that dependence by restoring unlimited trade as before. With a large permanent pool of unemployed in our country, the recovery of hundreds of millions of dollars of business each year would help us and it would certainly make things easier for Cuba.

This program would not bring back “the good old days”—but nothing will. It is predicated on U.S. willingness to cut its losses in Cuba for the sake of holding on longer in Latin America. That's as much as the monopoly capitalists can expect to

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do now. Someone has said that the U.S. must change its policy "to capture the minds and hearts of people everywhere." My proposal would do that in Latin America as nothing else will.

It is true that it would be difficult to get the American people to support an about-face proposal like this one, in their present frame of mind. But they have been drilled into conformity to Washington's present insane foreign policy; and by using the press, radio, and TV just as skillfully, they could be drilled into conformity in the other direction. It would take time, but it could be done. As a matter of fact, a surprisingly large number of quite influential Americans are already expressing their doubts about the wisdom of another armed invasion of Cuba.

One thing is certain: Planes and guns won't solve the problem of Cuba and Latin America and they will bring disaster and shame to our country. It is time for the United States to return to the principles on which it was founded. It is time for the United States to begin to practice the democracy it preaches.

Imagine the task of those who undertake to tell the truth to the people of the U.S., where public opinion has for years been under a ceaseless deluge of propaganda—films, the big press, the great radio and TV networks engaged in a veritable contest of falsehood and hysteria. Imagine the difficulty of bringing this public opinion back to reason.

We believe that this public opinion is capable of responding—but that whoever undertakes to make it respond will have to choose between yielding to great pressures and obstacles or courageously deciding to face up to them. But to those who face up to them, who have the courage to tell the people the truth—to those who are honest and frank with the people—to them will be the victory over the pressures and all the lies.

—Fidel Castro

We deplore the outrages that accompany revolutions. But . . . the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, skepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice: they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort are to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

—Lord Macaulay, *Essay on Milton*, 1825

AN INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL CARDENAS

BY HARVEY O'CONNOR

On the afternoon of Saturday, March 26, we were ushered into the office of Mexico's former President Lázaro Cárdenas, a large pleasant room, one side of which was filled with books in Spanish and English, on themes ranging the entire economic, social, and political gamut of 20th-century civilization. Strange—or is it?—for the peasant's son of Jilquilpan who can claim only four years of formal education in a rural school. "I got my education," he explains, "in the fields of Michoacan."

The secretary showed us around the room. Behind the desk is a great mural by Orozco in which the shining figure of Gandhi arises, clad in his breechclout, to one side of the Imperial Crown of India, the chains, and the cannon which held the sub-continent in vassalage for nearly two centuries; below and to the other side, the figures of the peoples of India.

And, a small detail, under the bronze plaque memorializing Gandhi lies the picture of an intense but smiling man with horribly mutilated legs. He is Pedro Albizu Campos, the hero patriot of Puerto Rico, now languishing in a United States jail. His name means nothing to most North Americans, but from the Rio Grande to the Tierra del Fuego it is honored. We had the good fortune in Havana to meet his—I almost wrote widow—wife, a gracious lady who sparkled with vivacity despite the sorrow of her life. She has been made an honorary citizen of Cuba, together with her imprisoned husband. In another part of General Cárdenas' office were flags of Puerto Rico and Cuba.

To one side of the desk is a mural by Diego Rivera, in stark reds and blacks, the colors of the Mexican Revolution, portraying the agony of Ricardo Flores Magón, the Mexican revolutionary who died in Leavenworth Penitentiary in 1922. A figure hardly remembered in our own country, but all over Mexico avenues and plazas are named for Flores Magón, the

The author of The Empire of Oil, Harvey O'Connor is now completing a second volume tentatively entitled The Decline and Fall of the Empire of Oil. It will be published by MR Press.

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"intellectual author of the Revolution," whose funeral train was guarded by the Railroad Workers Union from the border to Mexico City, where his body was entombed in the Rotonda de los Hombres Ilustres.

A visiting delegation gone, General Cárdenas pulled out his chair from behind the big desk and drew it closer to us. In his pictures, he is the solemn Indian general who came up the hard way in the Revolution fighting alongside the *campesinos* of Michoacan for Peace, Liberty, and Bread. But the face is not solemn in speaking, the Indian phlegmatism—if there is such—disappears, humor crinkles around his eyes, his hands freely emphasize his words. For the nearly two hours we talked, no telephone rang, no secretary appeared until near the end to bring in some papers the General wanted us to see.

One theme kept weaving itself throughout the questions and answers, the theme which is the mainspring of Cárdenas' life: Agrarian Reform. The General does not pretend to be an economist or savant, he is still the peasant's son of Jilquilpan who remembers every day of his life the pain and poverty of a campesino's lot in Mexico. "Not just Mexico," he emphasized. "Everywhere in Latin America it is the same. Except in Cuba," he added.

"Industrialization? Of course! But we can't hope to rival the United States, Western Europe, and Russia in heavy machinery. And industrialization without agrarian reform is a curse to us."

We had driven from downtown in a dust storm typical of the winter-spring season. The city, in broad daylight, lay somber and leaden as the winds whipped the dust clouds from the dry lakebeds of Texcoco. Mexico City has grown monstrously in the past generation from one million to four and a half millions—now the largest city of Latin America. "Most of the people struggling to live in this megalopolis," said the General, "are displaced peasants, refugees from the countryside."

Lázaro Cárdenas divides his time between Mexico City and Pátzcuaro, out in Michoacan, much the bigger fraction being spent there and in touring the vast TVA-like project he directs which ranges through several states. "We are doing everything to build a decent life there," he explained. "There is water control, irrigation, hydroelectric power and drainage for

the villages, small industry, a steel plant on the Balsas River, health and education services. There are no latifundias in that area, mainly small peasant holdings. Then there is the Papaloapan project in Veracruz, Puebla, and Oaxaca states, and others in the planning." To a question on possible overpopulation, he smiled: "We have vast 'green lands' in the south which can support millions, once they are developed."

Is the peasant better off today? "Definitely," answered the General. "Potable water is being piped into more and more villages. Where people used to drink from contaminated sources, we are now supplying purified water. Their intestines are better. Sanitation and electricity are spreading through the countryside."

On the less satisfactory aspects General Cárdenas was mostly silent. After all, he is a former President. And part of the mystique that surrounds the Presidency in Mexico is that no one speaks publicly in a disparaging manner of the President. To some extent, the same *noblesse oblige* hovers over former Presidents. They are seen but not heard. The great slogans of the Madero Revolution in 1910 were Effective Suffrage, No Reelection. While the effective suffrage slogan has become inoperative in recent years, the No Reelection theme is still enforced. Cárdenas himself came into office as a protégé of former President Calles; when Calles sought to continue to exercise power, he was sent packing to Los Angeles. And so Cárdenas, when he retired from office in 1940, withdrew from active political life.

A question often asked is, why didn't he seek to install a strong figure in the Presidency who would continue his agrarian reform policies? Perhaps his first public words on that conundrum came in a talk to students the other day on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Workers University. "Why didn't I deliver the government over to a radical?" he asked himself. "Although a personal friend of mine was a candidate, General Francisco Mújica, the presidential succession was determined in the electoral struggle, and furthermore there were problems of an international character. When I retired from the Presidency the workers were organized, and everyone knew that I never interfered with the internal affairs of the unions. The peasants were organized, they held the land with guns in their

hands. The teachers, government employees, and the army were loyal." It seemed as if Cárdenas were saying that he had left a situation in which the Revolution should have continued evolving, and that the No Reelection rule forbade his interference in the course of events.

The General did not touch too directly on the current political scene. With a smile, he said of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, the government party, in a play on Spanish words: "El Partido es muy partido" (the Party is very divided) —a reference to its various tendencies, rightist, bureaucratic, and leftist. Nevertheless he feels that there is a great civic inquietude in the country. If local and state organizations could freely choose candidates responsive to the people's needs and thus restore the democratic base of PRI, the country could progress peacefully. Otherwise there may be an explosion. "In Cuba, the people rebelled, and now are building. But in Mexico a civil war would destroy the national wealth. The first thing a Mexican thinks of when he rises in arms is to burn a bridge or set fire to a refinery."

Not until the last two Presidential regimes did Cárdenas return to occupy a prominent position in political life, as head of the Michoacan TVA project. What brought him back? The peasants. It is evident that the demoralization in the countryside has stirred him into an active role, not only in Mexico but in the world arena where he has emerged as the spokesman for Latin America's aspirations.

"I found that the least protected people in Mexico, and particularly the peasants, were being subjected to a perverse propaganda under the pretext of fighting Communism. In various places the *ejidatarios* [men and women of the farm communes] asked me if it were true that Communism is faithfully portrayed in this propaganda. They were told that if Communism were established in Mexico, the children would be sacrificed, that no one would enjoy liberty, or have the right to meet, and that the people would live as in a prison."

At that point Cárdenas felt it essential to visit the Communist countries to get the answers for himself. With a group of friends he went to Europe. "We weren't interested so much in Western Europe," he related. "We wanted especially to visit the new countries. It wasn't just that I wanted to see for myself,

but I wanted to be able when I returned home, to give the facts as I saw them.

"In Moscow and elsewhere in Russia I went into churches—they were open, and people, mostly elderly, were on their knees worshipping the images in which they believe. And as for the children, well, it was winter and the babies were being wheeled in their buggies; occasionally mother or brother would stop to see that the little one was well wrapped up. They keep a bit of cotton in the buggy to wipe the snow off the baby's face. So much for all the lies about Communism and the church, the family, the children—lies, all lies to poison the minds of our campesinos.

"In China I saw a laborious people building, building, building. There is an old saying, 'to work like a Chinaman.' I would wish that our own people could have the chance to work and progress like the Chinese, to make our own Mexico great. My colleague, former President Portes Gil, has just returned from China. So far he has not been accused of being Communist, but he has spoken in the most fervent terms of the great achievements of the Chinese people. I understand he is completing a book on his impressions of People's China." Later General Cárdenas showed us, with evident pleasure, a large portrait of Mao Tse-tung, presented to him in Peking.

Most of the Mexican press intones endlessly the theme that while, perhaps, Cárdenas personally is not a Communist, yet. . . . "Those accusations mean nothing to me," he said, as if brushing away a fly. "We who live in the cities know that the perversion of the truth means nothing. What is important is that the man in the fields, the most isolated, is the victim of this perverse campaign of anti-Communism. I consider it criminal to poison the minds of our country people. It is creating troubles of all kinds among families in the rural communities."

Before the recent Latin American Conference for National Sovereignty, and Peace, *Siempre!* the lively leftist weekly, in response to charges being bruited in the Mexico City press, put the \$64-question to Cárdenas:

"You ask me whether I am a Communist," responded the General. "I would ask you: what is Communism? I know that you know the answer. But I refer to the anti-Communist propaganda being spread daily, and all the time more vigorously,

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by people whose motives we all know. The Communism which this propaganda propounds kills people, steals children from their parents, persecutes religious beliefs—of this Communism I know nothing. In visiting the Soviet Union and China I saw nothing like it, but on the contrary, people fighting for their freedom, their economic liberation, and their dignity. Can one be against a theory which attempts to resolve the problems of the masses?

"For myself, I do not expound Communism. Communism can come to a country only if the people want it. It is not an alien doctrine to any people. In theory, Communism is, above all, a doctrine of economic emancipation, a theory which proposes to raise people to the highest level."

The conversation turned to President Kennedy. "Do you expect any improvement over the Eisenhower Administration, in Latin American relations?"

"Yes, if President Kennedy will stand up to the big monopolies the way President Roosevelt did. It is these monopolies, which also oppress the people of the United States, that are sucking the life-blood out of Latin America. In the recent Conference we held in Mexico City, we spelled this out: The fundamental force which is blocking the development of Latin America is North American imperialism."

Somehow the perspective held out by General Cárdenas for improved inter-American relations did not seem too hopeful. So we turned to the matter of the \$500,000,000 credits earmarked for the rest of the Continent. Certainly the money will be of some use, we hazarded.

"Of course," said the General. "If the credits are used in accordance with national and continental planning." The General emphasized the Spanish word, *planificación*. "Otherwise the credits will be ineffective, if not just wasted."

"The countries of Latin America must plan for their economic liberation. Unfortunately most of our governments are not in a position to plan, largely because of the pressures that come from the North, from the big monopolies which prefer to use Latin America as the source of raw materials and as a market."

Cárdenas became vehement. "The trouble up there," he said, waving vaguely toward the North, "is that it's all business."

People are business. Latin America is business. Until the United States begins to see America as a continent with people, and not just a market, raw materials, customers, with money to buy, buy, buy, the rulers will not understand us. They will not understand that we have little money, we are poor, we need above all to be allowed to develop economically, to become truly independent. What we really want, and what I prefer, is true continental development, in which the United States and Latin America cooperate in building a better society for all of us."

At this point, General Cárdenas interposed a judgment on the failures at times in Latin America itself. "To be a governor, to govern," he said, "one must have principles. One must have convictions. Most important, one must have the courage of his convictions. He must understand the needs of the people and fight for the people. Such men will be attacked. What matter? When I was President, I was attacked. To me it did not matter. President Roosevelt was great because he knew the needs of the people and responded to them." The man speaking with such earnestness is the President who is remembered in history as the Great Expropriator, who dared to throw Standard Oil and Shell out of the country to assure Mexico's economic and political independence. He had the courage of his convictions.

Did the General consider armed aggression by the U.S. imminent against Cuba? "No," he answered emphatically. "Invasion of Cuba would mean the loss of Latin America, the beginning of the end. No, I don't believe U.S. armed invasion is in the cards."

"But isn't a Guatemala possible in Cuba?"

"Impossible! Remember that in Guatemala the peasants did not have the land, the people were unarmed, and the old army was intact. In Cuba none of these conditions exists for the triumph of counter-revolution. The situation is not at all parallel."

"The Cuban Revolution was an uprising against tyranny and oligarchy. The whole world—conservative or revolutionary—has the duty to protect Cuba's sovereignty. To defend Cuba is to defend Mexico.

"The best proof that the Cuban Revolution is a popular revolution lies in the fact that the people are armed. If it were true, as is said, that 4,000 Cuban children have been torn from

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their parents' arms to be sent to Russia, these parents could have used the guns in their hands against the government. This is a fundamental truth that only those who do not want to understand cannot understand."

The theme of violence recurred. "There is violence all over Latin America," Cárdenas said. "Here in Mexico one of the delegates to our Latin American Conference was murdered the other day by so-called anti-Communists when he returned to his home in Lower California. Three hundred thousand people have been slain in Colombia in the past ten years. Violence there is in Brazil, in Argentina, in Peru. It is a sign that the continent is boiling, that repression is being met in the only way that plain, simple people can react when there is repression."

The suppression of practically all news of the Latin American Conference in the Mexico City press, we observed, was a symbol of this repression. "Yes," he answered, with some bitterness. "We even tried to place paid ads in the papers carrying the Declaration of the Conference. They refused, saying that they would publish only what they considered opportune. The *gran prensa* is at the service of the imperialists."

As chairman of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, I was anxious to put one final question to General Cárdenas. What can be done, I asked, about David Alfaro Siqueiros, Mexico's greatest painter, held in the federal penitentiary since last August without bail for trial for the crime of "social dissolution?" And the thirty others, mostly leaders of the Railroad Workers Union, and of the Communist party?

General Cárdenas did not answer immediately. Then he said, simply, "Nothing that I could say would be helpful. Therefore I will say nothing."

Escorting us from his office, he asked if we knew Waldo Frank. He stepped over to a filing cabinet and drew out a recent letter from the distinguished North American writer. "A true friend of Latin America," he said.

We left with some humility. How desperately the Latin American people crave understanding by the people of the United States. How desperately important it is that the people of the United States somehow break through the iron press curtain that hides from them the true Cuba, the true Mexico, the true Latin America.

LETTER TO THE UNITED NATIONS

BY LAZARO CARDENAS

The events concerning Cuba which have occurred in the last few days call for profound understanding and immediate action by the peoples of the Latin American countries. What at first might have seemed a mere domestic matter or a conflict which would affect only the already strained relations between Cuba and the United States, is now revealed in its true magnitude.

The Cuban question has become the focus of grave international tension. The intent of carrying forward an aggression against a small country, resolute in the valiant defense of its territorial sovereignty and integrity, threatens the very life of the United Nations as well as those principles on which this body rests; it places America and the world at the brink of a crisis which, if it is not resolved by reason, justice, right, and plain common sense, can precipitate a nuclear world war.

The Cuban Revolution is not, as is maintained vainly and falsely by its enemies, a movement alien to the will of its people, nor is it a danger threatening the security of the continent or that of any American country. It is a revolution made by the people. It is one of the great American revolutions. It is a movement that responds to old yearnings and to new restless cravings for emancipation not only of the Cuban people, but of all the peoples who understand that the hour is come when they can achieve full independence. To imagine that a new armed aggression could turn back an irreversible historical process—which is the core of all genuine revolution—is not only a fantasy which must soon vanish, but a violation of the juridical principles which all countries must respect for the sake of their own interests, as well as an insensate attitude which could plunge the world into irreparable tragedy.

The Latin American Conference for National Sovereignty, Economic Emancipation, and Peace recently held in the City of

This letter, dated April 28, 1961, was addressed to the Secretary General of the U.N., the Organization of American States, President Dorticos and Prime Minister Fidel Castro of Cuba, and Prensa Latina.

LETTER TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mexico, resolved to contribute by all possible means to defend Cuba's inalienable right to govern itself in the manner chosen by its people, the only masters of their destiny.

In addressing those in all Latin America who feel that the defense of Cuba is essential to safeguard the sovereignty of each of our countries, I believe I fulfill my obligation as a citizen and that I express faithfully, besides, the feelings of the Latin Americans who were represented in the Conference of Mexico.

The quick and crushing repulse of the Cuban invasion has not been sufficient to remove the danger. The government of the United States, apparently unaware of the grave consequences of its acts, continues its determination to overthrow the Cuban Government. Whether to proceed or not to proceed with United States intervention in the affairs of Cuba is not what North American official circles are now discussing. Rather, what is now being decided is in what form to carry out the aggression. And, while there are some who think that economic and diplomatic pressure should continue to be employed, others publicly declare themselves in favor of direct military intervention.

We are confronted with the gravest crisis which America has faced since World War II, a crisis toward which no one can remain indifferent. Besides the unbreakable determination of the Cuban people to defend with its life the achievements of the Revolution, the demonstrations of solidarity which resulted from this latest act of aggression clearly indicate the enormous support our brother country has everywhere. *Cuba is not alone. Attempts to isolate her have failed. The Soviet Union's decision to defend Cuba if it is openly attacked by the United States means that if there is direct military aggression, the United States itself—whose people, like all other people want peace—would be in danger of suffering a destruction of incalculable proportions; and it is even possible that before the continent would be aware of such an aggression against Cuba, perhaps Washington or New York would be transformed into another Hiroshima.*

It is imperative to understand the gravity of the situation. It is urgent to find a peaceful solution. The ways to such a solution are open. The Cuban government has just reiterated its willingness to solve the existing tension and to arrive at a for-

mula for peaceful coexistence with the United States—a formula which would include reestablishment of harmony and friendship with that country. Cuba's only demand is to discuss the matter on a basis of equality, with strict adherence to international law and practice. It is up to the United States to respond, not with measures which would increase the tension, but rather with measures based on absolute respect for the indisputable right of the Cuban people to adopt whatever social or political organization they choose.

The whole world is watching what takes place in Cuba. Numerous governments have expressed themselves in favor of non-intervention. Except for the United States, Peru, Honduras, and two or three other countries of the continent, all the others, including Canada, maintain normal relations with Cuba; this enhances the possibility of finding a quick and satisfactory solution.

There is still time to avoid a catastrophe. All that is required is to come face to face with reality and to act accordingly. To attempt to rectify the error of having encouraged an invasion by launching another of longer range, could bring the aggressors to suicide. The defenders of national sovereignty, economic emancipation, and peace in Latin America have a responsibility that cannot be shirked: to do without delay whatever is within their reach to prevent an interest alien to that of our peoples, an interest blinded by passion, prejudice, and hatred toward the Cuban Revolution, from dragging us toward a war which would inevitably affect all of humanity.

A Reminder from Cuba to the United States

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. . . . That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

—*The Declaration of Independence*

WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

Latin America's Big Problem

April 14, 1961 was Pan American Day in Washington. President Kennedy paid a visit to the Pan American Union and was presented to the assembled guests by Fernando Lobo, Brazilian Ambassador to the Organization of American States and chairman of its Council.

In introducing the President, Ambassador Lobo approved Mr. Kennedy's March 14, 1961 statement on United States aid to Latin America: "This new world of ours is not merely an accident of geography. Our continents are bound together by a common history—the endless exploration of new frontiers. Our nations are the product of a common struggle—the struggle against colonial rule. And our people share a common heritage—the quest for the dignity and freedom of man."

Ambassador Lobo commented on President Kennedy's statement that "Our Hemisphere mission is not yet complete" and continued his presentation with a question: "Why is our task in the Americas not yet fulfilled, after four centuries of history, after 150 years of independence, after so many struggles and so much hardship endured by so many generations?" The Americas were settled by Europeans seeking to protect themselves from oppression. Unemployment, hunger, disease, and ignorance reflect unsatisfied needs, and "as such, they are a form of oppression."

Unemployment, poverty, disease, and ignorance curse millions of Latin Americans, as they curse other millions around the globe. In addition, Latin Americans are burdened by a fifth curse. When Lazaro Cardenas was President of Mexico he was asked to name Mexico's toughest problem. Instead of mentioning land reform, education, or housing, Mr. Cardenas replied with three words: "The United States."

All of Latin America, to a greater or lesser degree, has been oppressed by that fifth curse during the century that followed the Mexican War of 1846-1848. It is oppressed, to a greater or lesser degree, by that curse today. The North Ameri-

can camel has got its head into the Latin American tent. Gradually, insistently, its big body is following. When the camel's body fills the tent, the owner will be crushed or forced out.

Visit any Latin American city and see Socony, General Motors, Pan American Airways, First National City Bank, and Coca Cola signs almost as numerous as they are in New Jersey, Illinois, and California. On every business street goods made in the United States are offered for sale. "Infant industries" established in Latin America during the period of scarcity and high prices that accompanied and followed the 1939-1945 war, now face oppressive competition from long-established North American manufacturers and distributors.

Yankee merchants, producers, and investors are not transients in Latin America. They have bought property, established themselves in business, and are there to stay as long as their ventures show a profit. Year by year a large part of these profits leaves the country and helps to enrich the economy of "the richest nation on earth."

Yankee pressure on Latin America is political as well as economic. From the days of the Monroe Doctrine (1823) through the Mexican War of 1846-1848 and the Spanish War of 1898 large blocks of Latin American territory have been dragged across the frontiers and annexed to the United States. During the Mexican Revolution which began in 1910 President Wilson directed two military invasions of Mexican territory. In the United Nations, Washington has been able, until the last few months, to cast its own vote, plus the votes of twenty Latin American countries, for or against crucial propositions such as the admission of Peoples' China to the U.N.

Latin American resources are being depleted, Latin American business properties are being bought up (United States "investments" in Latin America are rated at \$9 billion), Latin American dirt-cheap labor is being exploited, and Latin American political policies are being made in a way to increase the wealth and power of the oligarchy which presently controls the United States. The biggest of the many big problems oppressing Latin Americans is the ever-present Yankee Menace.

The "Colossus of the North" oppresses Latin America, not because a particular person is in office, or because a particular party is in power, or because a particular policy, such as "dollar

diplomacy" or "alliance for progress" is being followed in Washington. United States oppression of Latin America derives from four causes: (1) the relative magnitude of United States industrial productivity, wealth, and military power; (2) the dependence of United States economy on the raw materials, markets, and investment opportunities of Latin America; (3) the necessity of using Latin America as a military base against foreign enemies; (4) the Latin American feeling of cultural superiority in the face of Yankee economic and political superiority. All four of these causes would continue to operate if President Kennedy could increase his proposed Latin American aid from \$500 million to \$5,000 million annually.

Yankee Imperialism Comes a Cropper

President Kennedy (a Democrat) agrees with President Eisenhower (who ran on the Republican ticket) that the United States cannot permit the establishment of a Communist state in the Western Hemisphere. President Kennedy underscored the point in his April 20, 1961 talk to the Newspaper Publishers Association when he said: "Cuba must not be abandoned to the Communists, and we do not intend to abandon it either."

Prime Minister Fidel Castro answered this contention on April 28 in an argument with one of the prisoners captured by the Cuban Militia during the April invasion. "To a questioner who asked him if the Cuban Government was Communist, Dr. Castro replied that if the people of Cuba want a Communist regime, who has the right to deny it to them?" (*New York Times*, April 28, 1961, p. 2)

Castro's retort invoked the principle of self-determination against Washington's might-makes-right dictum that armed force will be used if necessary to prevent any people outside the Iron Curtain from going Communist.

Both Eisenhower and Kennedy applied their anti-Communist doctrine to the Castro regime. Through their subordinates they spent a year in enlisting, financing, training, equipping, and transporting a military force of Cubans which invaded Cuba on April 17, 1961. The landing party of some 1400 was defeated in battle by the Cuban militia. The invasion fiasco was more than a set-back to an armed force of Cubans intent on overthrowing the established, recognized Cuban Govern-

ment. It was a decisive defeat for the United States.

The Cuban episode is as yet in its early stages. The United States, under its present leadership, with its present domestic and international commitments, cannot permit the Castro regime to survive. The Soviet Union is strongly committed to defend Cuba in case of invasion. The April phase of the struggle is only the first act of the drama. United States efforts are presently directed toward persuading, blackmailing, or coercing the twenty Latin American states to join the United States in breaking diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba.

Latin America Goes Three Ways

Latin American reaction to the "Colossus of the North," the "Yankee Menace," and "American Imperialism" expresses itself sharply in an anti-Americanism which President Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon encountered on their southward travels, and which any one who meets Latin American students, professionals, or city workers can discover after ten minutes of conversation. Anti-Americanism is merely a superficial expression of deep-seated opposition which is functioning along three lines.

First is the understandable and widespread reaction of Latin American business men to "dumping" and other forms of unfair Yankee competition in Latin American markets. Business men are equally sensitive about the "buying up" of Latin properties by oil, sugar, fruit, mining, and other North American business interests, and making economic and political decisions which result in profits to North America and at the same time continue unemployment and poverty in South America. The same business men are equally sensitive about selling their independence birthright in exchange for Yankee economic and technical aid. This type of anti-imperialism is rampant in Latin America today.

A *second* type of Latin American reaction to foreign domination and exploitation is a move for united action against a common imperialist enemy. There are twenty Latin American countries—some large, others small; some rich, others poor. During the struggle against Spanish domination there was much talk of united action against the European oppressors, but the idea was not put into practice. Today, President Quadros of

Brazil (the most populous country in Latin America) is engaged in a strenuous effort to strengthen Brazilian economy, make that country the great power in South America, follow a policy of Latin America for Latin Americans, resist outside interference, and establish a South American power bloc that can protect itself against the "Yankee Peril."

There is a *third* type of Latin American reaction organized in the Mexican Revolution of 1910, in the Peoples' Progressive Party of British Guiana, in the Cuban socialist revolution. While these movements vary in strategy and tactics, they agree in their rejection of imperialism, in their demand for economic and political self-determination, and in their insistence that mid-twentieth century capitalism and imperialism are obsolete social forms and should be replaced forthwith.

This is an age of socialism, the spokesmen for these movements argue. The peoples of Latin America have tried for generations to win independence, security, abundance, and human dignity under capitalism and imperialism. The results of their efforts appear in the unemployment, poverty, disease, and ignorance which curse Latin America today. Furthermore these economic and social forms of oppression are the result of capitalist domination and exploitation during the past 150 years. Experience and reason support the contention that these curses will continue to blight Latin American lives until capitalist domination in Latin America yields place to socialism.

All three movements, like most reform and revolutionary movements in present-day Latin America, are led by students, professional people, and other members of the intelligentsia. Illiteracy in Latin America ranges up to 80 per cent in the countryside and is also high in the cities. From the literate elements in the population the leadership of Latin American revolutions is being drawn. Their mass support comes from exploited underpaid manual and white collar workers in the cities and from the partially employed, poverty-stricken, disease-ridden, illiterate, barefoot workers of the countryside.

Revolution in Latin America

Democratic processes have not worked in Latin America during the past 150 years. Until recently three forces have dominated and enforced public policy in Latin America: the

landowners, the army, and the church. Increasingly, domestic and international business interests have pushed their way into this ruling oligarchy. Today in the rapidly growing cities and in national politics, business rules, but its effectiveness requires the close collaboration of the army and the church. Only in the countryside do landlordism and peonage play a significant role.

Basic power shifts in Latin America are made by revolution in its classical meaning: "an over-turn or turning over, as of a wheel." Minor power adjustments often are validated at the ballot box and follow political maneuvers. Normally, however, the business-military-church oligarchy sifts and shifts public officials as painlessly and noiselessly as the directors of United States Big Business shift their executive personnel. Serious changes in policy and administration are made by power seizure. Most Latin American power seizures are routine affairs. The existing governing personnel is pushed out and replaced by the ruling oligarchy, which assumes responsibility for making and unmaking ministries and supervising administrative procedure.

Since 1910, in step with the times, Latin American revolutions have been influenced by socialist ideas and have turned increasingly to social ownership, social planning, and cooperative production and distribution of goods and services. Needless to say, socialist construction in Europe and Asia has been watched and studied by Latin American revolutionaries.

Socialist revolution in present-day Latin America is as inevitable as it was in Asia after 1945. The balance of forces favors revolutionary as against legal, gradual change. Even a limited military intervention by the United States in Cuba might drop the spark into the Latin American powder-keg. Another general war would insure a socialist revolution.

***Have You Joined MR Associates Yet?
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(continued from inside front cover)

these lines are in print." That issue was first sent to the printer on April 13; on April 14, Leo Huberman left for Havana, and on April 15, the first stage of the invasion—the attack on the air bases—was launched. But it was not only on Cuba that MR readers were alerted—the issue also contained a revealing article on conditions in South Korea. About that article, a letter from a reader dated May 15 says the following: "I am still unable to figure out what's happening in Seoul from today's newscast, but at least I have a clearer notion of the forces in tension there." For those who want to reread the article in the light of later events, we call your attention to a printer's error which we failed to catch in page proof: on page 28 in the quotation from the Asian Daily News on diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea, line 5 from the bottom should be deleted, and in its place substitute the following, "Korea will be normalized around June of this year (1961) in ac—"

From time to time in these pages, we have notified our readers of grants offered by the Fund for Social Analysis, for "the encouragement of research into questions of Marxist theory and its application." Now comes the news that the members of the Awards Committee of the Fund, and a number of the scholars who received grants-in-aid, have been subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee. We want to remind the academic community that this attack on freedom of inquiry and opinion is an attack on them; that their colleagues in the National Education Association met similar attacks on learning, by the McCarthy Committee, with a resolution adopted unanimously on June 30, 1953, which, "condemns the efforts of those who advocate book burnings, purges or other devices which restrict freedom of thought and which are, in effect, an expression of lack of confidence in the integrity, loyalty and good judgment of the American people."

We have been cheered considerably by the excellent statements that have come from lawyers, professors, and other intellectuals rightfully alarmed at the prospect of further intervention by the U.S. in Cuba. The historians' "Open Letter to the President" was signed by members of 41 university and college faculties—an impressive list which could have reached 500 in number had there been enough time.

A new pamphlet on Cuba by Corliss Lamont is advertised on our back cover. Another new pamphlet entitled, "Cuba vs. the CIA," by Robert Light and Carl Marzani focuses attention on the systematic misinformation fed to the American people by their own government. Price \$1—order from Marzani & Munsell, 100 W. 23 St., New York 11, N. Y.

Over 1300 people came to the MR Associates Twelfth Birthday Party to hear Leo Huberman report on Cuba—the largest meeting in our history. It was taped for a later broadcast by WBAI. Because of the necessity for clarity on the subject of Cuba, we have made recordings of the lecture on a 7½ I.P.S. dual track tape for groups who want to have local meetings. The cost is \$10 postpaid. Send your order, with payment enclosed, to MONTHLY REVIEW, 333 Sixth Ave., N. Y. 14, N. Y.

Important note to summer vacationers: the combined July-August issue is usually mailed on July 1st or soon after. If you will be on vacation in July and there will be no one at home to receive your mail, be sure to send us—*right away*, if possible—your vacation address. If you plan to vacation in August only, then don't bother to send us a change of address since no magazine is mailed to you in August. Happy vacation!

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